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THE RED CROSS



IN CHARGE OF

JANE A. DELANO, R.N.

Chairman of the National Committee on Red Cross Nursing Service

RED CROSS WORK FOR FLOOD SUFFERERS

SINCE the beginning of April a flood, unprecedented in the history of our country, has gradually worked its way from Cairo, Ill., where the Ohio River joins the Mississippi, on through the fertile valley regions of Tennessee, Arkansas, Mississippi, and Louisiana. It has been estimated that a land area greater than Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island combined, or about 15,000 square miles, has been inundated.

While the loss of life has been singularly low, thousands of people have been left homeless and the stories one hears of their escape from rising floods, suffering, and exposure, are beyond belief. The majority of the refugees gathered into the various camps were, of course, destitute, and for weeks the army, with its great resources has been feeding multitudes. A definite report is not yet available, but government rations have probably been issued to more than 200,000 flood victims, and the army has expended more than \$700,000 in relief work. In addition to this the Red Cross has also received in contributions for relief over \$117,000. Much of this has been, or will be, expended in rehabilitation work—in the repair and rebuilding of houses, in the purchase of seed grain, farm animals, and farming implements; but, unfortunately, in some localities the flood subsided too late for the cotton planting.

Late in April the flood had reached Mississippi and Louisiana and the danger of sickness was greatly increased by the warm weather. A call for Red Cross nurses to be sent to Vicksburg, Miss., was received in Washington, April 21. Realizing that the New Orleans nurses would soon be needed in Louisiana, a message was sent to Harriet Leck, chairman of the Kansas City Local Committee on Red Cross Nursing Service, asking if she could supply four Red Cross nurses at once. A reply came back in a few hours stating that thirteen nurses had volunteered. Etta Lee Gowdy was selected as head nurse, and Misses Nash, Farmer, and Stewart were sent with her to Vicksburg. There were over 2000 refugees in the two camps to which the Kansas City nurses were assigned. Miss Gowdy, in an interesting report recently sent in, states that 1686 patients

were treated in the clinics which were held daily in connection with the camps, and that the nurses also cared for 79 hospital patients. Quoting from her report:

"Besides the hospital and clinic work we have given out dozens of boxes of clothing and shoes, distributed soap, pans, spoons, and made up and distributed gallons of condensed milk to children. Our work has really been that of visiting nurses."

Soon after the arrival of the Kansas City nurses in Vicksburg, the call came from Louisiana, and I can do no better than submit extracts from a report recently submitted by Emma L. Wall, chairman of the Louisiana State Committee on Red Cross Nursing Service, who was authorized by the Red Cross to make a tour of inspection of all camps where Red Cross nurses were on duty. Miss Wall reports:

"Early in April, when Illinois and Kentucky were feeling the effects of the high water, we farther south began to feel uneasy about our levees and to expect just such a calamity as has befallen us.

"With the permission of our National Chairman on Red Cross Nursing Service and Dr. Oscar Dowling, president of the Louisiana State Board of Health and in charge of the refugee camps in Louisiana and Mississippi, I recently had the pleasure of visiting all the camps where we have Red Cross nurses.

"On April 25, Dr. Dowling asked Miss Delano for four nurses. On the 26th, Misses Seddon, O'Meara, Cardwell, and Schlegel left for the flooded district of north Louisiana. Misses Seddon and Schlegel were sent to Millikens Bend, which is located about twenty miles above Vicksburg, in Louisiana. Their description of the first night in camp is thrilling. The camp is about three miles inland from the river, but on account of the overflow water they had to go some distance across lagoons in a skiff. In the meantime a terrific rain and thunder storm had come upon them, which raged for several hours.

"At Millikens Bend there were over 1700 refugees, all colored people, who had been driven from their homes by the water, some barely escaping with their lives,—but nearly all saved their dogs.

"The Misses Cardwell and O'Meara were assigned to Wilton. This camp is twenty miles above Millikens Bend, and here the storm was so severe that the boat had to seek shelter among the willows.

"I found the nurses, after four weeks of camp life, as brown as berries, but well and contented. Wilton camp is beautifully situated on a bayou. It is not as large as Millikens Bend, having only about 600 refugees. I spent the night there and enjoyed it all, even my morning coffee in a tin cup. Regular army rations was the fare, but the nurses are well treated and are doing fine work. The officer in charge of the



HOSPITAL TENT, VICKSBURG, MISS.



RED CROSS NURSES DISTRIBUTING SUPPLIES, VICKSBURG, MISS.

camp told me that he had been opposed to women in camp, but that he had been converted, and now wants nurses at all encampments. The Vicksburg camp is better located than those on the Louisiana soil. The refugees are camped in the cotton presses; but the nurses have a tent, and the dispensary and hospital are in tents. At Baton Rouge the nurses live on the health car. I feel sure that the nurses have done good work, and that we will hear nothing but praise.

"In Vicksburg there are four nurses from Kansas City, Mo. I found them all charming young women, and we in Louisiana appreciate the good work they have done for us."

A more detailed report of the work at Baton Rouge has been received from Miss Gillespie, who was acting head nurse when the camp closed. The other New Orleans nurses who were assigned to this camp were the Misses Ellis, Jordan, and De Laughter. Miss Gillespie in her report says:

"Here in Baton Rouge about 4000 found refuge. Sanitary regulations were strictly enforced by the State Board of Health, with the militia on guard. The Red Cross quarters, at some distance from the main camp, consist of eight tents, with accommodations for twenty-five patients, distributed through five tents. The nurses occupy one tent, another is devoted to the dispensary, while the eighth is filled with refrigerators where the milk is kept, thirty to forty gallons being sent daily by the King's Daughters from Hammond, La. Above the hospital, floats the flag of the Red Cross. This is a centre of particular attraction. Over 1000 patients have been treated in this dispensary. Here physicians and nurses hold clinic, nurse the sick, and minister to their wants in general. At special hours drugs are dispensed, and twice daily hundreds of little ones are served with milk. The nurses have worked indefatigably, and have every reason to rejoice at the good accomplished.

We have had altogether thirteen Red Cross nurses on duty in Mississippi and Louisiana. In each case the response to our call has been prompt, and, so far as we know, there has been neither friction nor discontent. Too much cannot be said in praise of the splendid spirit shown by the nurses, and we feel sure that not only have the sick been well cared for but that many a homeless and disheartened refugee was happier and better for their presence.

REPORT OF DETROIT WATER FETE

A WATER fête was held in Detroit during the fourth week in July in commemoration of Cadillac's exploration of that region, over two hundred years ago. The early history of Detroit was depicted by a grand

historical pageant, and the development of the country was shown by an automobile parade, various water races and tournaments, and an industrial pageant made up of forty floats.

As a large attendance was anticipated, the city requested the local Red Cross Chapter to establish relief stations adequate for the care of any possible emergency. Under the efficient management of Mrs. Lystra E. Gretter, chairman of the Michigan State Committee on Red Cross Nursing Service, and a member of the executive committee of the Detroit Chapter, such relief stations were successfully conducted.

The following report has been submitted:

"It is my privilege to report to you as chairman of the National Committee of the American Red Cross, the part taken by that organization in the Cadillac Emergency Hospital Service.

"An effective co-operation was formed with the Police Department, the physicians of the Army Medical Reserve, the Red Cross Nursing Service and the Boy Scouts.

"Four First-Aid Relief Stations were formed in the following places: Grand Circus Park, the Belle Isle Bridge approach, Owen Park, and the old police station on Belle Isle. Twenty-five of the enrolled Red Cross nurses volunteered and relays were kept at the various stations every day, and at night until ten o'clock. Dr. Louis J. Hirshman, the physician in charge of the medical work, reported approximately one hundred cases treated. Of these about seventy were minor accidents, thirty were of a more serious nature: two resulted fatally. A complete list of the people injured may be had from the central police station.

"The tents and the chairs were provided through the police department. Cots, blankets, pillows, ice caps, hot water bags, 'Abso-pure' water and sanitary drinking cups were furnished by the Red Cross. The materials for the Red Cross emblems were purchased here and were made up by the nurses. The brassards were lent by the national headquarters in Washington. The drugs and surgical dressings were supplied chiefly through donations from Parke, Davis & Co., and the J. H. Hartz Co. Hiram Walker & Sons gave two quarts of Canadian Club whiskey; the Peoples' Ice Co. donated three ice coolers and the daily supply of ice, and Mr. J. E. McDonald gave two hot-water bags. A liberal discount on goods purchased was made by all of the merchants, and arrangements were made to give credit for all articles returned in good order. The articles that were used will be stored for further emergency service. With the approval of the chapter, they will be listed and kept at the headquarters of the Local Committee on Red Cross Nursing Service, in the Wayne County Medical Building, 33 High St., East.

"In conclusion I will state that the committee considers that the opportunity to render emergency service on this occasion fully justified the effort and the expense. Furthermore, it was a distinct advantage to mobilize the corps of nurses for the practice that it gave for meeting in the future, possibly some serious emergency.

LYSTRA E. GRETTTER,

"Chairman State Committee."